Border Area Development Programme, North Eastern Council and Tribal Sub-Plan. Further, the Government is implementing specifically designed Centrally Sponsored anti-poverty programmes for generation of both self-employment and wage - employment namely, Swaranjayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana, Jawahar Gram Samridhi Yojana and Employment Assurance Scheme in rural areas. These programmes have been redesigned and re-structured in order to improve their efficacy/impact on the poor.

Projects in Rural and Hilly Areas by KVIC

5006. SHRI PRAKANTA WARISA: Will the Minister of SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES AND AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) the details of projects being implemented in the rural and hilly areas of Assam by the Khadi and Village Industries Commission to promote small scale industries during the last three years;

(b) the number of small scale industries in Assam for which loans have been granted by Government during this period; and

(c) the steps being taken or proposed to be taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES AND AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE): (a) In order to promote the village industries projects, the Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) is implementing the Margin Money Scheme in all the States including the hilly areas. Under the scheme, 25% of the cost of the project up to Rs. 10 lakhs, and additional 10% of the cost of the project above Rs. 10 lakhs but upto Rs. 25 lakhs, is being provided as margin money. For the North Eastern Region, margin money is provided at the rate of 30% and required contribution of beneficiaries is 5%.

(b) The details of the SSI units in the State of Assam in the portfolios of Scheduled Commercial Banks for the last 3 years are given as under:—

Year	No. of units
1996	71,151
1997	62,086
1998	62,074

(c) The KVIC has operationalised Cane and Bamboo industries in the Silchar District of Assam under the Cluster Development Progamme. The KVIC is also contemplating to implement a separate action plan for the development of the Bodoland Autonomous Council Area in the State of Assam.

Apart from the efforts made by the KVIC, some of the policy initiatives taken to promote healthy growth of SSIs are mentioned below:—

(i) For tiny units, i.e. where the investment in plant and machinery does not exceed Rs. 25 lakhs, the exemption limit for dispensing with collateral security has been raised from Rs. 1 lakh to Rs. 5 lakhs.

(ii) The limit for composite loans (i.e. providing working capital and term loan through a single window) has been raised from Rs. 5 lakhs to Rs. 10 lakhs.

Moreover, introduction of a Credit Guarantee Scheme for SSI units with credit limits up to Rs. 10 lakhs without collateral security, is under active consideration of the Government.

Minimum Export Price for Coir

5007. SHRI A. VIJAYA RAGHAVAN: Will the Minister of SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES AND AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the State Government of Kerala has submitted any representation against the reduction of Minimum Export Price for coir products;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES AND AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE): (a) and (b) The Minimum Export Price (MEP) on coir products was revised in 1995 by the Ministry of Textiles. However, the Coir Board on its own enhanced the MEP in 1997 in anticipation of the approval of the Ministry of Textiles. The Ministry of Textiles did not, however, give its concurrence and rejected the proposal of the Coir Board. The State Government of Kerala vide its letter dated 7th April, 1999 had requested the Ministry of Textiles to review their order.

(c) The representation of the State Government of Kerala was duly considered by the Ministry of Textiles but could not be agreed upon.